(d) The Government have not so far made a formal request to the U N, but have made it clear to the U N that they do not have any role to play in Jammu and Kashmir

(e) Government has not come across any instances of the U N. Observers having contacts with terrorists in Jammu & Kashmir.

Minor irrigation programmes

694 SHRI J S RAJU. Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state

(a) whether there is any programme to bring area under minor irrigation to cover dry land and rainfed areas with the Central Government financial support;

(b) whether District-wise, Block/Pokets concentrated with Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes have been identified under this minor irrigation programme with earmarking of funds for the benefits of Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes; if so, details thereof, and

(c) whether Government are aware of potential area for minor irrigation tanks in the rainfed|dryland area in Perambular and Ariyalur taluks of Trichurapalli districts of Tamil Nadu, if so, the proramme of construction of minor irriation tanks in these two taluks concentrated with Scheduled Castes|Scheduled Tribes through Central Financial support?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI MANUBHAI KOTADIA): (a) Yes, Sir, under the Integrated Tribal Development programme.

(b) District-wise pockets concentrated with Scheduled Tribes have been identified under the minor irrigation programme for the benefit of Scheduled Tribes. About 103 schemes of construction of check dams at an estimated cost of about Rs. 375 lakhs to creat a potential of about 1445 ha. have been programmed for VIII Five Year Plan under Integrated Tribal Development Programme (ITDP) There is no such proramme for the benefit of Scheduled Castes under this scheme

(c) There is no programme to construct Minor irrigation tanks for the benefit of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes only in Perambular and Ariyalur Taluks of Trichurapalli district of Tamil Nadu

Releasing toxic substances in environment by Union Carbide Plant at Bhopal

695 SHRI SYED SIBTEY RAZI: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state

(a)whether some reports have appeared that Union Carbide Plant at Bhopal has been releasing toxic substances in environment for a long time,

(b) if so, what are the details thereof;

(c) whether leakage of same substances in 1984 led to death of more than 3000 people in Bhopal,

(d) whether Government propose to take some action urgently in the matter to avert chances of same incidents which occured in 1984; and

(e) if so, what are the details thereof and if not what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI): (a) and (b) Reports have appeared in a section of the press that toxic substances in substantial quantities are still present in the environment around the Union Carbide Plant in Bhopal Reports are based on a paper published by the US-based National Toxic Compaign Fund, after laboratory analysis of samples from the former Union Carbide Plant site *According to the report*, Dichlorobenzene, an insecticide and chemical intermediate that can damage the liver, kidneys and respiratory and nervour systems besides causing irritation, weight loss and sometimes even death, was found in the community drinking water tanks. The pre-

sence of a group of cancer-causing agents called polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHS) was also reported to have been discovered in the waste impounded area.

This report was assessed by the National Environmental Engineering Research Institute (NEERI), Nagpur on a request from the Madhya Pradesh Pradushan Niwaran Mandal, Bhopal. According to the findings of NEERI after analysing samples from 10 wells situated within a 5 km. periphery of Solar Evaporation Ponds (SEP), of Union Carbide Plant no toxicity was detected in the water from these wells. NEERI also tested the presence of dichlorobenzene in the water of six tube wells and found the concentration within the safe limit of 10ppb. (parts per billion)

(c) There was an emission of toxic gases from the Union Carbide pesticides plant at Bhopal, M.P. on the night of the 2nd-3rd December, 1984. The number of persons whose death has been attributed to this gas leak, as reported by the Government of Madhya Pradesh, is 3828 persons as on 22-11-90. 6,39,793 persons have also made claims for compensation for personal injury of which 3,58,713 claims have been categorised according to degree of injury by the Government of Madhya Pradesh

(d) and (e) The following action has been taken by the Government to avert chances of recurrence of similar incidents in future —

(i) Environment (Protection) Act, was enacted in 1986 It provides for management of hazardous substances and for laying down procedures and safeguards in this regard.

The following Rules have been notified under the Act

1. Manufacture, Storage and import of Hazardous Chemicals Rules, 1989.

2. Hazardous Wastes (Management and Handling) Rules, 1989.

3. Rules for the manufacture, use, import, export and storage of hazardous micro-organisms genetically engineered organisms or cells, 1989.

(ii) A crisis management plan has been prepared to deal with emergencies arising due to hazardous chemicals. It has a three-tier set up namely, a Central Crisis Group, State level Crisis Group or Co-ordination Committee and District Level Crisis Group.

(iii) The Central Crisis Group has already been constituted Most states and Union Territories have set up state level and district level crisis groups

(iv) Most states and Union Territories have identified hazardous chemical industries within their jurisdiction.

(v) 'On-site' and 'off-site' emergency plans in respect of a large number of the hazardous units have been prepared.

(vi) State Pollution Control Boards are provided with financial assistances under a centrally-sponsored scheme to equip them with facilities required for the management of hazardous substances.

(vii) An effective communication system has been set up for coordinated action in case of a major chemical disaster, with a Control Room working in the Ministry of Environment and Forests.

(viii) The people living around hazardous units are being sensitized by information and training so that they are in a position to meet an emergency or accident

Strike of telecommunications employees

696 DR. BAPU KALDATE:
SHRI M. VINCENT:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state·

(a) whether the telecommunications employees recently went on strike;